

# THE CHICAGO NEW AMERICANS PLAN

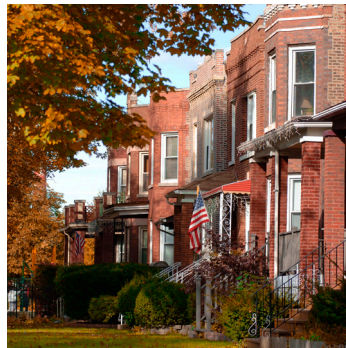
BUILDING A THRIVING AND WELCOMING CITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





## ★ CHICAGO WELCOMES THE WORLD



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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
City of Chicago

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## Dear Friends,

Throughout its history, Chicago has benefited from the immeasurable economic contributions of its immigrant populations and from the distinct and vibrant neighborhoods they helped to create. Today, Chicago's immigrants remain crucial drivers of our economic growth and cultural vitality. This is why I am committed to making Chicago the most immigrant-friendly city in the world. The Chicago New Americans Plan is a roadmap for building a thriving, diverse, and welcoming Chicago.

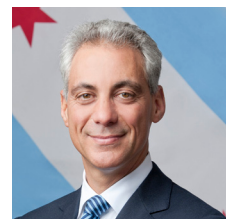
Immigrants in Chicago face unique challenges and barriers to meaningful and successful integration. To fully leverage the contributions of immigrants, I assembled an advisory committee comprised of 50 business, academic, civic, philanthropic, community and immigrant advocacy leaders in Chicago. This committee was tasked with developing strategies to ensure that we support the creation and expansion of immigrant-owned businesses, that we develop, attract, and retain talent and expertise from other countries, and that we bolster Chicago's status as a vibrant and welcoming international city.

The Chicago New Americans Plan outlines a set of initiatives the City will undertake in the next three years. The plan represents a fundamental commitment to immigrants. While other cities move to make themselves less welcoming toward immigrants, we choose to value their contributions, recognizing the importance of immigrants to our city's future.

This comprehensive plan is the first of its kind for any major city in the country. The plan will help Chicago establish its place as a leader in the 21st century global economy.

You can learn more and share your thoughts with us at [www.cityofchicago.org/newamericans](http://www.cityofchicago.org/newamericans)

Rahm Emanuel  
MAYOR OF CHICAGO



Look around the streets of Chicago: from our world-famous St. Patrick's Day parade to our Mexican community in Little Village, from the world's second largest Polish population to the nation's award-winning Confucius Institute, immigrants have helped to shape our city in countless ways. With residents from over 140 countries and more than 100 languages spoken in our city, Chicago is a city of immigrants. They are vital to our local economy, contributing billions of dollars annually.

In July 2011, Mayor Rahm Emanuel created the Office of New Americans and set the aspiration for Chicago to become the world's most immigrant-friendly city. Just months later, the Mayor convened an advisory committee comprised of 50 leaders representing Chicago's business, academic, civic and philanthropic communities. The goal of the advisory committee was to identify challenges unique to immigrants, recommend initiatives to be implemented over the next three years, and develop detailed implementation plans for the Office of New Americans and its partners.

The Chicago New Americans Plan outlines a set of initiatives to welcome immigrants and maximize the contribution they make to our city. Improving the ability of Chicago's 560,000 foreign-born residents to augment our economy will lead to economic, social and cultural benefits for all Chicagoans.



## POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT FROM THE CHICAGO NEW AMERICANS PLAN INITIATIVES

### WHEN CHICAGO...

### ... THE CITY WILL BENEFIT GREATLY

**Helps immigrant-owned businesses flourish**

Immigrant-owned businesses could create 10,000 to 20,000 more jobs if Chicago increased its job growth rate from small and medium-sized businesses to match the highest-performing U.S. city.

**Doubles the exports from immigrant-owned businesses**

Doubling immigrant-owned business exports could produce an additional 24,000 to 30,000 jobs.

**Becomes a more attractive city for high-skilled, foreign-born workers**

For every 100 additional high-skilled foreign-born workers who work in science, technology, engineering or math fields, 260 jobs could be created for U.S.-born workers.

**Increases graduation rates for high school immigrant students and helps more immigrants earn their GED certificate**

For every additional high school diploma earned by Chicago students, gross state product could increase by \$15,000.

**Increases immigrant participation in early childhood programs**

For every dollar invested in early childhood education, Chicago could save seven dollars in government spending.

A coordinated implementation effort will be critical to unlocking the immense potential of Chicago's immigrants. The Office of New Americans will work with City departments and sister agencies, chambers of commerce, faith-based organizations, various ethnic and immigrant organizations, and other stakeholders to implement this plan, ensuring our place as one of the world's most immigrant-friendly cities.





The Chicago New Americans Plan recommends a broad array of new programs and initiatives, which are designed to improve the day-to-day lives of immigrants while promoting Chicago's economic growth and cultural vitality. The plan's 27 initiatives are grouped into three categories: Our Growth, Our Youth, and Our Communities. A full list of initiatives follows on page six.

### OUR GROWTH

- A. Immigrant-owned businesses
- B. Human capital



### OUR YOUTH

- C. Children of immigrants
- D. Parents and schools



### OUR COMMUNITIES

- E. Public safety
- F. Access to services
- G. Civic engagement



### ■ Our Growth

Over the last decade, Chicago has experienced below average growth in gross regional product, annual average wage, and population size. We can reverse this trend by lowering barriers to entry and growth for immigrant-owned businesses. By proactively spurring immigrant entrepreneurship, Chicago will ensure that it is fully capitalizing on the potential of immigrant entrepreneurs. The City can also improve its economic outlook by more effectively leveraging immigrant talent to fill workforce gaps. There were more than 100,000 unfilled positions in our city in 2011, a number that is expected to grow over the next decade. We will accelerate economic growth by training and attracting immigrants to fill these positions.

### ■ Our Youth

To attract top employers and create jobs for all residents, our city must have a skilled, educated workforce. Immigrant children will make up the next generation of Chicago's workforce – 37% of all children in Chicago come from families with an immigrant parent. But immigrant children face various challenges: they often need language assistance; they are less likely to be enrolled in early childhood education programs; and their parents at times struggle to engage with schools. We will support immigrant children by investing in their education, which will in turn benefit all Chicagoans by preparing our next generation workforce.

### ■ Our Communities

Chicago's immigrants are important members of our communities. They contribute to our city culturally, economically, and socially. Because immigrants are important to our communities, we must ensure that they feel protected, welcomed, and integrated. Currently, immigrants face challenges in building relationships with public safety officials, accessing City services, and becoming naturalized citizens. By supporting immigrants in overcoming these challenges, we can build stronger ties between immigrants and non-immigrants, while increasing the safety of our neighborhoods.

## OUR GROWTH

### A. Immigrant-owned businesses

- 1 **Increase exports from immigrant-owned businesses:** The City will work with World Business Chicago to increase exports from immigrant-owned businesses. They will develop forums and networking opportunities for immigrant business-owners, and provide access to a catalog of resources for export assistance.
- 2 **Create a small business incubator:** The City will create a specialized small business incubator that provides technical assistance, mentorship, and access to an affordable shared commercial kitchen space.
- 3 **Create a “Chamber University”:** The City will create a “Chamber University” to train leaders in chambers of commerce so they are better able to support immigrants in starting and growing their businesses.
- 4 **Create pop-up City services:** A team of City departments will provide City services to immigrant business-owners through periodic visits to immigrant neighborhoods. These workshops will provide resources and services in the communities’ languages, including licensing, permitting, and inspections.
- 5 **Promote tourism in immigrant neighborhoods:** Choose Chicago will actively promote immigrant neighborhoods to tourists through rotating neighborhood spotlights. Choose Chicago will also work with chambers of commerce and other organizations to help business-owners advertise their businesses to visitors.

### B. Human capital

- 6 **Ease transition back into professional careers:** The City will partner with the City Colleges of Chicago to develop options for high-skilled immigrants to transition to professional careers by providing credit for prior learning.
- 7 **Expand access to ESL and GED programs:** The City Colleges of Chicago, with support from the City and community-based organizations, will increase the number of English as a Second Language (ESL) and General Educational Development (GED) programs in areas of high need. In addition, the City will support City Colleges in restructuring adult education to improve outcomes.
- 8 **Enhance skills through employee programs:** The City Colleges of Chicago and the City will partner with employers to increase access to English as a Second Language and General Educational Development programs.



### C. Children of immigrants

- 9 **Improve early education:** The City will work with Chicago Public Schools to ensure that early childhood sites are well-placed and well-equipped to serve immigrant children across the city.
- 10 **Encourage participation in summer enrichment programs:** The City will inform immigrant students and families about summer enrichment programs that immigrants can access and will identify ways to increase immigrant students' access to One Summer Chicago programs.
- 11 **Support undocumented childhood arrivals:** A broad coalition of stakeholders, including the City, Chicago Public Schools, and community-based organizations, will launch targeted efforts to support undocumented youth, equipping them to benefit from the Executive Order for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals.

### D. Parents and schools

- 12 **Increase access to college savings programs:** The City will work with Chicago Public Schools and Bank-On Chicago to host workshops for immigrant parents on financial literacy and college savings programs.
- 13 **Expand parent mentor programs:** Chicago Public Schools will expand its parent mentor program to additional schools. This program brings parents into classrooms to assist teachers, engages parents in parent-to-parent mentoring, and provides leadership development opportunities for parents.
- 14 **Create more parent engagement centers:** Chicago Public Schools will expand the number of drop-in parent engagement centers in immigrant neighborhoods. At these centers, parents can access information on topics like parenting skills, learn about services available to them, and develop technology skills.
- 15 **Provide specialized training for school personnel:** The City and Chicago Public Schools will partner with community-based organizations to train teachers, counselors, and other school administrators about the challenges immigrants face and the resources available to students.

## OUR COMMUNITIES

### E. Public safety

- 16 **Pass a Welcoming City ordinance:** The City will pass an ordinance affirming and expanding basic protections for undocumented Chicagoans. In addition, the City will develop a process to receive and act on violation complaints.
- 17 **Establish Welcoming City training:** The City will train key personnel, including police officers, fire and emergency personnel, and other City staff about the Welcoming City ordinance.
- 18 **Engage the Chicago Police Department:** The City will work with the Chicago Police Department to create opportunities for regular meetings between immigrant advocates, community-based organizations, and local police commanders.
- 19 **Reduce immigration services fraud:** The City will launch a targeted campaign to reduce immigration services fraud, increasing inspections of immigration services providers and providing information on fraud to immigrants.

### F. Access to services

- 20 **Implement a language access policy:** The City will pass a language access policy to ensure that immigrants are able to access critical services and information in the most common languages spoken in Chicago. The City will work to develop customized language access plans for departments and agencies that interact with immigrants.
- 21 **Establish cultural sensitivity training:** The City will develop and provide cultural sensitivity training to City employees, including police officers, fire and emergency personnel, and other City staff, to better serve and protect immigrants.
- 22 **Launch Welcoming City campaign:** The City will create a one-stop online portal to connect Chicago's immigrants with services and provide information to immigrants considering moving to Chicago.
- 23 **Create Welcome stations:** The City will create public stations where immigrants can access targeted resources, services, and information, such as naturalization workshops and health screenings.
- 24 **Ensure access to local healthcare services:** The City will convene a committee of healthcare providers and subject matter experts to analyze opportunities to expand immigrants' access to healthcare.

### G. Civic engagement

- 25 **Encourage civic participation:** The City will prepare immigrants for civic participation by offering civic engagement classes and linking immigrants to civic opportunities like board membership and leadership programs.
- 26 **Expand naturalization campaign:** The City will work with community partners to develop, publicize, and host naturalization workshops. The City will also open "Citizenship Corners" in community hubs, where information on naturalization will be provided to immigrants in the most common languages spoken in Chicago.
- 27 **Host citizenship celebrations:** The City will host citizenship swearing-in ceremonies, inviting communities to share in immigrants' achievement.

To make Chicago the world's most immigrant-friendly city, the City must effectively manage the implementation and success of this plan. With 27 interdependent initiatives and dozens of stakeholders, the Chicago New Americans Plan requires a robust measurement system that is capable of monitoring the success of initiatives, while also tracking progress toward higher-level goals.

The Office of New Americans will utilize a multi-tiered scorecard to measure initiative implementation and results. The scorecard will also evaluate the extent to which the initiatives together are improving economic, civic, and cultural vitality for Chicago. This scorecard will evaluate the progress of peer cities in comparison to Chicago's progress. Regular scorecard updates will keep stakeholders informed on initiative-level performance, allowing them to react to challenges and make adjustments as needed. The following table provides a sample of the metrics that will be used.

### Sample performance indicators

#### ■ OUR GROWTH

- Export revenue for immigrant-owned businesses participating in program
- Number of applications received for shared-kitchen incubator
- Number of immigrant entrepreneurs trained through "Chamber University" program
- Number of immigrants using pop-up City services
- Number of immigrant neighborhoods promoted by Choose Chicago
- Number of candidates successfully completing GED or ESL programs
- Number of unfilled positions in science, technology, engineering, and math
- Number of participants in employer programs that enhance skills

#### ■ OUR YOUTH

- Enrollment gap between immigrants and non-immigrants in Early Childhood Education programs
- Academic performance gap between immigrant and non-immigrant children
- High school graduation rate gap between immigrants and non-immigrants
- Number of work permits issued through the federal Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program

#### ■ OUR COMMUNITIES

- Percentage of police officers trained to uphold the Welcoming City ordinance
- Number of people participating in regular meetings between the Chicago Police Department and immigrant community-based organizations
- Number of annual immigration services fraud complaints
- Percentage of City departments and sister agencies that have implemented language access plans
- Number of visitors to the Welcoming Chicago portal
- Number of people attending Welcome Stations
- Percentage of Chicago Public Schools, Local School Council, and Park District advisory council seats filled by ethnic minorities
- Percentage increase in number of naturalization applications received



## CONCLUSION

Immigrants present enormous opportunities for Chicago's future, both in terms of cultural and economic prosperity. The initiatives outlined in the Chicago New Americans Plan will expand the potential of Chicago's thriving immigrant community, whose contributions, in turn, will push Chicago even further ahead as a dynamic, world-class city. The plan's positive impact on Chicago will accelerate over time as more initiatives are deployed in full measure. Additionally, as changes are made to federal and state law, the Office of New Americans and local stakeholders will look for new ways to support Chicago's immigrant population.

The goal of making Chicago the most immigrant-friendly city in the world will be achieved through the collaborative efforts of the City of Chicago, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, and other stakeholders. Working together, all residents can look forward to a city with abundant jobs and economic opportunities, with a rich cultural life enhanced by diversity of perspective, and with youth who are better educated and ready to become successful contributing adults.

### Acknowledgments

The Office of New Americans thanks all of the members of the advisory committee for their contributions and leadership, and looks forward to continued engagement during the implementation of the Chicago New Americans Plan.

### Office of New Americans advisory committee members

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Nancy Aardema               | Logan Square Neighborhood Association                                  |
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| Jill Kushner Bishop         | Multilingual Connections   |
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| Luis Gutierrez              | Latinos Progresando  |
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| Alie Kabba                  | United African Organization  |
| Gary Kenzer                 | Polish American Association  |
| Clara Lopez                 | El Valor   |
| Emma Lozano                 | Centro Sin Fronteras   |
| Viviana Martinez            | Office of Cook County Commissioner Jesus Garcia                        |
| Denise Martinez             | Illinois Governor's Office of New Americans                            |
| Mary Meg McCarthy           | Heartland Alliance's National Immigrant Justice Center                 |
| Michael Mini                | Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce  |
| George Mui                  | U.S. Department of Commerce - Minority Business Development Agency     |

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Albany Park Community Center  
Erie Neighborhood House  
Instituto del Progreso Latino  
Chicago Cultural Alliance  
Iglesia Rebaño Church  
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Chicago Legal Clinic  
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**ATKearney**

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RES PUBLICA GROUP

Margo O'Hara

**Civic  
Consulting**  
alliance  
SMART WORK. GREAT CITY.

Gillian Darlow, Carla Esteva, Wallace Hilke, Elizabeth Coston

Thank you,



Adolfo Hernandez  
Director of the Office of New Americans  
Office of the Mayor  
City of Chicago  
November 2012

## INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED

### People interviewed

Cindy Agustin - Immigrant Youth Justice League, Sioban Albiol - DePaul University College of Law, Leroy Allala - Chicago Sister Cities International, María Almeida - Accion Chicago, Louis Dan Alvarez - Golden Hill Foods, LLC, Isabel Anadon - Latino Policy Forum, Augusto Aquino - Asociación de Vendedores Ambulantes, Sally Armbruster - World Business Chicago, Dale Asis - Coalition of African, Arab, Asian, European and Latino Immigrants of Illinois, Jonathan Brereton - Accion Chicago, David Brinn - Jewish United Fund / Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago, Rachel Bronson - Chicago Council on Global Affairs, Joanna Brown - Logan Square Neighborhood Association, Maria Bucio - The Resurrection Project, Vanessa Carter - University of Southern California Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration, Melissa Cherry - Choose Chicago, Victoria Chou - University of Illinois at Chicago, Cathy Domanico - Choose Chicago, Javier Esguevillas - University of Notre Dame, Mark Fleming - Heartland Alliance's National Immigrant Justice Center, Suzanne Franklin - Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society of Chicago, Michelle Garcia - Access Living, Hannah Gill - University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Institute for the Study of the Americas, Ana Guajardo - Centro de Trabajadores Unidos, Luis Gutiérrez - U.S. House of Representatives, Fourth Congressional District of Illinois, Joshua Gutstein - Minority Business Development Agency Business Center - Chicago, Claudia Henriquez - Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Jake Henry - McKinsey & Company, Juan Hernandez - Nuevo Labs, Jorge Hidalgo - The Mexican Consulate in Chicago, Barbara Higgins - Allstate Insurance, Joshua Hoyt - Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, Elisabeth Jansen - Logan Square Neighborhood Association, Liz Jellema - World Business Chicago, Janice Kaufman - Jewish Vocational Service Chicago, Christine Kenny - Literacy Works, Scott Leff - Leff Communications, David Lubell - Welcoming America, Sara Lundquist - Santa Ana College, Mary Carmen Madrid-Crost - Madrid Crost Law Group, Patricia Martinez - Nuevo Labs, John McDermott - Logan Square Neighborhood Association, Margie McHugh - National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy, Sarah Mesick - Southwest Organizing Project, Bridget Murphy - Logan Square Neighborhood Association, Brittney Nystrom - National Immigration Forum, Rhonda Ortiz - University of Southern California Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration, Marta Pereyra - Coalition of Limited English Speaking Elderly, Olga Prutnikov - Dina and Eli Field EZRA Multi-Service Center, Roberta Rakove - Sinai Health System, José Rico - U.S. Department of Education, Idaima Robles - Accion Chicago, Israel Rodriguez - Confederación de Federaciones Mexicanas, Richard Rodriguez - Res Publica Group, Juanita Salvador-Burris - Alliance of Filipinos for Immigrant Rights and Empowerment, Fatima Shama - New York City Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, Andrea Flores Shelton - County of Santa Clara, Office of Supervisor George Shirakawa, Sharon Shi - Law Offices of Xiaoming Shi, Tony Shu - Chicago Chinatown Chamber of Commerce, Juan Soto - Gamaliel of Metro Chicago, Rachel Steinhardt - Welcoming America, Carlos Tortolero - National Museum of Mexican Art, Fred Tsao - Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, Warren Wilkinson - Choose Chicago, Karolina Zaczek - U.S. House of Representatives, Fifth Congressional District of Illinois, Amie Zander - West Ridge Chamber of Commerce, Marwa Zohdy - McKinsey & Company

### Departments and Agencies

Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection, Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, Department of Family and Support Services, Department of Housing and Economic Development, Department of Innovation and Technology, Department of Law, Department of Public Health, Commission on Human Relations, Office of the City Treasurer, Office of Emergency Management and Communications, Office of the Mayor, Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, Chicago Housing Authority, Chicago Park District, Chicago Police Department, Chicago Public Libraries, Chicago Public Schools, City Colleges of Chicago









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